

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

October 1960



UNITED STATES COTTON EXHIBIT

at the XXVIII Official
International Samples Fair,
BARCELONA, SPAIN

Foreign Agricultural Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture

PREFACE

The United States cotton exhibit at Barcelona's XXVIII Official International Samples Fair, held June 1-20, 1960, was part of the broad program for market development carried on by the Foreign Agricultural Service in cooperation with United States agricultural industry. The United States has been participating in similar trade fairs since 1955.

Several distinguishing "firsts" characterize the exhibit. Representing one of the largest and most comprehensive foreign trade fair activities yet undertaken by the Foreign Agricultural Service, the exhibit was the first to be devoted exclusively to promotion of overseas markets for one agricultural commodity. Selection of cotton as the commodity to be promoted was appropriate because of cotton's traditional position as the leading United States agricultural export and in view of Spain's imports of more than a million bales of U. S. cotton during the past 5 years.

The objective of the exhibit was to promote the uses of cotton products in homes, in industries, and in fashion clothing for young people. As evidence of the extent to which the objective was achieved, the Executive Committee of the Fair presented the American Pavilion with three silver plaques, marking the first time in the 28-year history of the Fair that more than two awards were given to a single exhibit. One of the plaques was awarded to Displayers, Inc., of New York, for excellence of building design; a second was awarded to the U. S. Department of Agriculture for excellence of the exhibit; a third plaque was given to A. James Martin, Director of the Pavilion, for excellence of management. The exhibit, one of 2,604 in the Fair, including exhibits of 25 foreign countries, was visited by 434,000 people.

The exhibit, initiating the promotion of cotton in foreign trade fairs, was housed in a separate pavilion designed for maximum effectiveness in the use of audio, visual, and demonstrational techniques. Exhibit planning involved developing methods for placing maximum emphasis on practical ways in which cotton, "Nature's wonder fiber," could better serve the needs of people, and providing for the orderly flow of large crowds visiting the Fair during the many spring holidays. Promotional activities coinciding with the exhibit and providing publicity included the designation of June 5-11 as National Cotton Week, and visits to Barcelona of the U. S. Ambassador, the Maid of Cotton, the U. S. Mediterranean Fleet, and Spanish Government officials.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The skillful planning and effective staging of the exhibit is creditable in large measure to officials of the cooperating agencies, the Commercial Service of the Spanish Cotton Textile Industry (Servicio), the National Cotton Council of America, and Cotton Council International. Grateful acknowledgment is also made to William G. Lodwick, U. S. Agricultural Attaché to Spain, other U. S. Government representatives in Spain, Fair officials and representatives of contracting and supplying firms, and to local employees.

Letters of appreciation and 125 certificates were presented to individuals and organizations for their participation and cooperation in this project.



990577

UNITED STATES COTTON EXHIBIT

AT THE

XXVIII OFFICIAL INTERNATIONAL SAMPLES FAIR

BARCELONA, SPAIN

History and administration.--The Barcelona Fair began in 1920 as an Exposition. Then, as the International Samples Fair it was held each year from 1921 through 1925, 1933 through 1935, and 1942 through 1960, a total of 28 years. In 1929, it was the site of the World's Fair.

Operating under the direction of a president, a general manager, division heads, and an executive committee of some 20 members, the fair is recognized as one of the world's largest, best organized, and most efficiently operated. As the name implies, the objective is the promotion, through the display of samples, models, and techniques, of almost every conceivable article, with a minimum amount of space devoted to the entertainment and carnival aspects that are characteristic of American fairs. The fair dates, June 1-20, coincide with the late spring holiday season, culminating with St. George's Day, a holiday comparable to a combination of Independence Day and New Year's in the United States.

Location and grounds.--The fair occupies permanent quarters in the northeastern part of Barcelona, a city of about 1,400,000 population, located on the Mediterranean Coast, and one of the most modern and prosperous cities of Spain. The main entrance to the fair grounds is from the Plaza of Spain, the exhibit area extending to the huge National Palace, located on a hill 50 or 75 feet above the level of the entrance. About midway from the main entrance to the National Palace, there is a level area, the Central Plaza, approximately 300 feet wide and 800 or 900 feet long, in the center of which is located the world-famous illuminated Fountain de Montjuich. Adjacent to the fair grounds is an authentic reproduction of a typical Spanish village, maintained by the government since its construction in 1929 for display and sale of typical Spanish articles. In 1960, the fair had 2,604 exhibits, including 15 foreign pavilions containing exhibits from 25 foreign countries.

United States Participation

Background.--Planning for the United States exhibit as a promotion project to be financed with Spanish pesetas accruing under the Public Law 480 program was initiated in 1959. In the course of this planning, the decision

was reached that the exhibit would be devoted to promotion of a single commodity, and that the commodity would be cotton. In January 1960, a series of conferences held in Barcelona included the director of the pavilion, a representative of the New York firm selected to design the pavilion, officials of Servicio, representatives of Cotton Council International, the U. S. agricultural attaché to Spain, and representatives of the U. S. Consulate General and U. S. Information Service in Barcelona.

In these conferences, the theme of the exhibit was agreed upon, preparation of exhibit features was discussed, and specific responsibilities were accepted by the several cooperating agencies. Under the general theme of promoting lint cotton, with no attempt to confine the promotion to any specified type, quality, or growth of cotton, the plan had the following main features:

1. Cotton in the home, cotton in industry (including industrial clothing, uniforms, etc.), and cotton in selected stages of life;
2. The contributions of chemical research to better cotton products and to expanded uses for cotton;
3. Cotton for fashion clothing in latest teen-age styles;
4. A demonstration of mass production of ready-made cotton clothing (men's and boys' shirts); and
5. A continuous showing of the National Cotton Council's technicolor movie, "Cotton, Nature's Wonder Fiber."

Cooperation.--The cooperation of U. S. and Spanish agencies was documented by a large plaque displayed on the wall at the entrance of the pavilion. It read, in Spanish, as follows:

"This exhibition is presented by the United States Department of Agriculture in collaboration with Cotton Council International and the Commercial Service of the Spanish Cotton Textile Industry."

Major responsibility for producing and staging a distinctive presentation of new cotton fashions for young people, including the narration, was accepted by Servicio, and a contract was drawn to that end. Agreement was also reached that the responsibility for supplying the teen-age fashion clothing, the cotton products for a home and industry display, cotton materials to be demonstrated in the chemical treatment exhibit, and other cotton products and materials would be shared by FAS and the National Cotton Council. Plans were also drawn up for cooperation between FAS, Servicio, the National Cotton Council, Cotton Council International, Displayers, Incorporated, of New York, and other agencies of the U. S. Department of Agriculture in carrying on other necessary activities, including the following:



In American Day ceremonies opening the U.S. Pavilion at Barcelona Fair, U.S. Ambassador John Davis Lodge (center) is greeted by A. James Martin (left), Pavilion Director, and Marcello Leonari, Pavilion builder.

1. Designing and constructing the building;
2. Arranging exhibits and demonstration areas;
3. Preparing script for booth narrators and demonstrators;
4. Preparing an explanatory booklet in Spanish and English and other promotional material to be handed out to visitors; and
5. Procuring wall photographs and captions for display of cotton's many uses.

Selection of a commodity.--Promotion of cotton in Spain was considered appropriate in view of that country's actual and potential importance as a cotton-consuming country and as a market for U. S. cotton. Most of Spain's imports of U. S. cotton during the past 5 years, aggregating over 1 million bales, are consumed in the Barcelona area. Cotton production in Spain is substantially less than the country's requirements and is lacking in quality, except for mixing with other growths. U. S. cotton is preferred above all other growths in Spain. An excellent opportunity existed for complete press, radio, and television coverage of a cotton exhibit at the fair by coordinating the exhibit with National Cotton Week and the visit to Barcelona of the Maid of Cotton. At the time of the fair, stocks of cotton in Spanish mills were at very low levels, and additional cotton was badly needed to avoid having to cease operations. Spanish law requires that textile workers be kept on the payrolls even though mills might be forced to curtail operations or close down.

Spanish mill men and other textile interests are extremely anxious to improve the quality of their products for home consumption as well as for export. A number of modern methods and techniques of yarn and fabric treatment are not available in Spain and new processes and developments are eagerly sought.

The United States Exhibition

Attractiveness of the pavilion.--Located at one end of the central plaza, framed at the sides and back by large sycamore trees and facing the huge Montjuich Fountain, the American Pavilion occupied a highly favored site. Its location and the arrangement of its patio entrance caught the natural flow of crowds rounding the fountain on their tour of the grounds. Visitors were very favorably impressed with the spaciousness of the pavilion and adjacent area, having just come from the permanent buildings where exhibits were crowded into almost every foot of space. Also, they seemed to like the neat appearance of the steel and concrete building with the three large red, white, and blue "U.S.A." signs above huge open bolls of cotton, brightly lighted at night by spotlights hidden in the trees. The large patio areas near the entrance and exit and the wide passageways in the exhibit area were ample for movement of large crowds, even on the several days when more than 50,000 people per day went through the exhibit.

The pavilion was built roughly in the form of a cross, with a flat roof, white stucco exterior, and one-story wings extending from the rear portion of the two-story center area. Entrance was through the right-hand wing, the exhibit area extending in a semicircle through this wing and the ground floor of the center portion. The left-hand wing contained a large stage for presentation of the style show, along with dressing rooms and a room containing about 200 theater-type seats for showing motion pictures. The stage faced a large patio area, partly shaded by brightly colored cotton canvas stretched between overhead beams, where visitors gathered to view the style show after emerging from the exhibit area.

Exhibit areas.--The first exhibit seen by the visitor after he passed the bale of high-quality American cotton displayed in the entrance was the Chemical Display. In this a young man using a portable microphone explained how research, particularly in chemical treatment of cotton fibers and fabrics, helps to capitalize on cotton's many natural qualities to make it more useful and adaptable. At the same time, a girl performed tests on several new cotton fabrics that were stain and water resistant, flameproof, etc. The new cotton stretch yarn that was not yet available commercially was also shown, having been obtained directly from the USDA Southern Research Laboratory. Visitors were permitted to examine the fabrics and yarn. In addition, successive translucent signs on the wall pointed out improvements made in cotton products by research.

The Cotton in the Home exhibit seen next as the visitor continued his tour was in four parts, depicting the bathroom, breakfast room, living room, and bedroom of an average home. The bathroom served to show many of cotton's uses in disposable napkins, band-aids, adhesive tape, stretch bandage material, Q-tips, etc. In addition to cotton throw rugs, bath mats, towels,

wash cloths and dust cloths, a cotton shower curtain was opened to show a drip-dry cotton shirt.

Two child mannequins dressed in cotton sports clothing were seated at the table in the breakfast room, in which cotton rugs, curtains, place mats, and heat pads were also shown.

In the living room, girls wearing cotton fashions pointed out cotton's role in this part of the home, including a sofa bed which opened to show bed linens in place. The sofa's cutaway section showed the cotton cover and cotton linters stuffing. A cotton poplin raincoat, a light-weight shower-proof outdoor coat, and other cotton clothing were removed from the living room closet for demonstration.

The bedroom displayed a cutaway mattress with cotton padding and cover, cotton sheets, pillow cases, blanket, spread, and outside awning. A female mannequin wearing a cotton nightgown and robe was shown placing a child dressed in a cotton sleeper suit into a crib equipped with cotton, including cotton-stuffed toy animals.

To display Cotton's Uses in Industry, a demonstrator called attention to cotton's attractiveness and serviceability in occupational uniforms (as depicted by mannequins dressed as a nurse, house maid, waitress, dentist, and service station attendant). He also explained an animated, lifesize display on the opposite wall showing cotton's adaptability, strength, and durability in factories, fisheries, and on farms. This area also contained a booth with three mannequins to demonstrate the fashionable uses of cotton feed bags as clothing material.

Maid of Cotton Sandra Lee Jennings is fascinated by a demonstration of stretchable cotton yarn by Carmen Grau. On Miss Jennings' left is Otto Ackerl, Cotton Council International's Director for Austria, and on her right, Raymond Steinbach, the Council's European Director, Paris.





U.S. exhibit drew large crowds, who were pleased with the booklets given out and the demonstrations of cotton's varied uses.

Left, skit "Sweethearts in the Rain" is part of popular style show and features fashion clothing of cotton for teen-agers.

Mass Production of Cotton Clothing was demonstrated by a line of 12 industrial sewing machines in use by trained girl operators to show the various steps in the manufacture of men's shirts. Placards in color showed the operation performed by each girl and large overhead mirrors permitted visitors in the rear of the congregated throngs to "look down" on the operations.

On the wall opposite the mass production display, lifesize photographs depicted Cotton's Uses in Seven Stages of Life, from baby apparel to casual clothing worn by retired people.

Style show the "hit" of the exhibit.--The primary purpose of the style show, produced and directed by local talent with Barcelona boys and girls from ages 9 to 19 participating, was to promote ready-made cotton fashion clothing for young people. However, the cleverness of the skits and the unsophistication of the participants greatly increased its attractiveness. To a musical accompaniment, two teen-age narrators introduced the 15-minute show, which consisted of 13 skits. Among the featured skits were a birthday cake presentation, a humorous William Tell episode, a "sweethearts in the rain" scene, a weight lifter with bar bells, and a teen-age rock-and-roll demonstration.

Although the schedule called for 8 shows daily and 9 on Sundays and holidays, with 15-minute intervals, the show was staged many additional times by popular request on days when attendance at the exhibit was largest.

Visible from the open area around the Montjuich Fountain, the style show attracted many spectators from outside of the exhibit area, who then stayed to see the remainder of the pavilion.

Clothing modeled by the boys and girls in the style show consisted of latest cotton fashions for all occasions ranging from sports and recreation to school clothing and semiformal wear. Selected in New York by fashion experts of the National Cotton Council, many of the costumes bore labels of nationally prominent designers and were being modeled in Barcelona before they became generally available in the United States. By special arrangement, a portion of the clothing and other cotton material shown in the exhibit that could not be reused was made available to the boys and girls who served as models and demonstrators. A large donation was also made to a foundling home.

Exhibit culminated by famous cotton movie.--Adjacent to the style show patio area was the entrance to the 200-seat theater, in which the National Cotton Council's technicolor film, "Cotton, Nature's Wonder Fiber," was shown free to visitors during the Fair hours of 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. and 5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.

Principally for crowd-handling reasons, showings of the film were limited to such times as warranted by the audience. Including showings to employees and special groups, the film was run 204 times, with an average attendance of 115, or 60 percent of capacity.

Promotional Materials

The pavilion insignia.--Featured use of the pavilion insignia quickly identified the theme of the exhibit and distinguished it from all others. The serrated edges of the rectangular symbol connoted a swatch of cotton fabric. The letters "U.S.A." were superimposed on the red, white, and blue top portion, and the lower part depicted a large, open boll of cotton over a gray background. The borders, letters, and colors were edged with a gold color. The symbol was prominently used in large outdoor signs on the front of the three sections of the building; in the informational booklet printed in Spanish and English and given to adult visitors; on metal name badges worn by all officials and employees of the pavilion; and on the plastic-coated tags attached to loops of colored string, designed as "cat's cradle" giveaways for children. The swatch-of-fabric idea was depicted by lattice work on the front wall of the pavilion. The symbol was also made up on small metal key-ring tags and presented as souvenirs to distinguished visitors and to members of the working press, radio, newsreel, and television agencies at a press conference.

Staff and Personnel

The staff of the exhibit consisted of A. James Martin, FAS, Director; Joseph H. Stevenson, FAS, Assistant Director; Francis H. Whitaker, Roosevelt T. Baggett, and T. L. W. Bailey, FAS, Market Promotion; Lance G. Hooks, AMS, Publicity; Nancy Cugat, Barcelona, Personnel Officer; William Radford, Madrid, Interpreter; and Maria Isabel Cabrera, Maria Luisa Rojas, Herminia Texido, and Pilar Capdevila, Barcelona, Secretary-Receptionist-Interpreters.



The staff (seated at center) and the local employees photographed in the patio fronting the U.S. Pavilion at the Barcelona Fair. The Pavilion insignia, the serrated "USA/Cotton Boll" was used not only on the signs shown here, but on Exhibit promotional material.

Valuable assistance was rendered by staff members of the Embassy in Madrid and the Consulate and U. S. Information Service in Barcelona.

To staff and operate the exhibit, about 120 people, including style show participants, demonstrators, guards, projectionists, a chauffeur, and maintenance employees were employed locally. Young women office employees and demonstrators were provided with uniform-dresses of special made-to-order Spanish wash-and-wear cotton material. The men were provided with navy blue wash-and-wear cotton jackets.

Publicity, Public Relations, and Special Events

Public relations activities began with a press conference and reception early in March in Barcelona for members of the press, radio, and TV, and officials of the Consulate, the Fair management, and Servicio. Other events included official USDA press releases on April 11, June 10, and July 1; a press preview and reception in Barcelona on May 27; flag-raising ceremonies on opening day, June 1, assisted by units of the U. S. Mediterranean Fleet; reception, lunch, and ribbon-cutting ceremony for U. S. Ambassador John Davis Lodge; reception, luncheon, banquet, and pageant held during the visit to the pavilion of Sandra Lee Jennings, Maid of Cotton, on June 7; luncheons and special cotton promotional programs for Spanish cotton textile officials and Spanish cotton importers; visits of staff members to receptions at other pavilions and Fair headquarters, including the office of the president to receive the three silver plaques awarded the pavilion; and publicity received through press, radio, television, newsreel, photographs, and technical journals, including appearance of the style show group on nationwide television.

Extensive publicity was given to the exhibit throughout the Fair period by Barcelona newspapers, newsreels, and radio and television stations. Press releases and photographs were sent by request to newspapers, trade journals, and farm magazines throughout the U. S. Cotton Belt. Numerous requests by Spanish trade and industry journals for highly technical information not available in Barcelona were referred to Washington.

Promotional Effectiveness

New experience in cotton promotion.--The effectiveness of cotton promotion by the National Cotton Council in the United States and by Cotton Council International in other countries through emphasis on style clothing has long been proved. As a general type of promotion directed at consumers at large, the Barcelona exhibit provided experience that may be applicable in other locations and to other commodities. The stimulation of demand for a wide range of cotton products in a large cotton consuming country undoubtedly will result in increased exports of U. S. cotton if translated into purchases. It may well be that the eagerness of the Spanish people to adopt American cotton fashions and the desire of the mill industry to procure modern manufacturing techniques and processes will further early improvement in general economic conditions.

Without question, the promotional schemes used in the Barcelona exhibit were effective in planting ideas. For example, industry representatives were most anxious to obtain detailed information on the formulae and processes used in the manufacture of cotton stretch yarn and fabrics treated for stain and wrinkle resistance. Some of the items in the "cotton in the home" booths were new and attractive to Spanish people. The smartness and stylishness of teen-age fashion clothing displayed in the style show created much interest in ready-made garments and dispelled ideas that mass-produced clothing lacked style and variety. The shirt manufacturing exhibit showed that highest quality shirts can be economically produced in large volume.



Visitors of the U.S. Pavilion enjoyed seeing these young ladies make men's cotton shirts.

Sandra Lee Jennings, Maid of Cotton, shows great interest in the cotton-stuffed toy dog held by Christina Martin, one of the demonstrators in the U.S. Pavilion's "Cotton in the Home" exhibit. With Miss Jennings is R. T. Baggett of FAS.



The already-high regard of the Spanish people for the United States was heightened by the spaciousness, distinctiveness, cleanliness, and orderliness of the pavilion, by the absence of high-pressure salesmanship, and by the friendly, courteous treatment of visitors at all times by staff members and employees alike.